

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 070317
ORIGIN AF-04

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 EUR-08 PM-03 CIAE-00 NSC-05
NSCE-00 INR-05 EB-04 EA-06 TRSE-00 MC-01 L-01
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AF/S -FWISNER
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-----300404Z 042201 /14

P R 300250Z MAR 77
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY
INFO AMEMBASSY GABORONE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 070317

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS:PFOR, MILI, UK, BC

SUBJECT: BOTSWANA'S SECURITY PROBLEM

REF: GABORONE 739

1. RECENT MONTHS HAVE SHOWN INCREASED EVIDENCE OF
BOTSWANA'S DETERMINATION TO IMPROVE ITS INTERNAL SECURITY
CAPABILITY. THE GOVERNMENT OF BOTSWANA HAS DECIDED TO
DIVERT SOME OF ITS LIMITED RESOURCES FROM ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT TO STRENGTHENING ITS SECURITY FORCES. BOTSWANA'S
PARLIAMENT IS CONSIDERING A BILL WHICH WOULD CREATE A
"BOTSWANA DEFENSE FORCE". BOTSWANA IS PURCHASING 400
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PAGE 02 STATE 070317

AUTOMATIC RIFLES AND AMMUNITION FOR ITS POLICE MOBILE UNIT
FROM US AND UK FIRMS AND PLANS EXPANSION OF THIS UNIT
IT HAS ALSO SOUGHT AND RECEIVED AN UNKNOWN AMOUNT OF
MILITARY EQUIPMENT FROM THE PEOPLES REPUBLIC OF CHINA.

2. GOB HAS OCCASIONALLY DISCUSSED BOTSWANAN SECURITY
PROBLEM WITH USG, BUT REFTEL CONVEYS FIRST DIRECT GOB

REQUEST TO DATE FOR MODEST MILITARY AID. IN LIGHT, HOWEVER, OF ADMINISTRATION'S CURRENT REVIEW OF OUR GLOBAL ARMS TRANSFER POLICY, WE ARE NOT RPT NOT ABLE TO PROVIDE SPECIFIC RESPONSE TO GOB REQUEST.

3. AS YOU MAY KNOW, BOTSWANA IS NOT RPT NOT CURRENTLY ELIGIBLE TO PURCHASE DEFENSE ARTICLES AND SERVICES THROUGH FOREIGN MILITARY (FMS) PROCEDURES ESTABLISHED BY THE ARMS EXPORT CONTROL ACT, AS AMENDED. FMS ELIGIBILITY WOULD REQUIRE FINDING BY PRESIDENT UNDER SECTION 3 OF ARMS EXPORT CONTROL ACT THAT SALE OF DEFENSE ARTICLES AND SERVICES TO BOTSWANA "WILL STRENGTHEN THE SECURITY OF THE UNITED STATES AND PROMOTE WORLD PEACE". IN ABSENCE OF FMS ELIGIBILITY, GOB MAY, HOWEVER, MAKE PURCHASES THROUGH COMMERCIAL CHANNELS SUBJECT TO MUNITIONS CONTROL EXPORT LICENSING REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES.

4. ACTION REQUESTED: EMBASSY SHOULD RAISE WITH FCO BOTSWANA'S SECURITY NEEDS. YOU MAY WISH TO FOCUS ON THE FOLLOWING AREAS:

-- UK ASSESSMENT OF BOTSWANA'S SECURITY NEEDS; IS CREATION OF DEFENSE FORCE SOLELY RESULT OF DETERIORATING SITUATION IN RHODESIA, OR ARE OTHER FACTORS INVOLVED?

-- HOW MUCH OF BOTSWANA'S NEEDS HAVE BEEN MET BY THE PRC; DOES THIS INITIAL PRC ASSISTANCE TO BOTSWANA FIT INTO BOTSWANA'S DEFENCE FORCE DEVELOPMENT PLANS?
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PAGE 03 STATE 070317

-- UK INTENTIONS CAPABILITIES TO ASSIST BOTSWANA IN MEETING ITS REQUIREMENTS THROUGH PROVISION OF CREDITS FOR EQUIPMENT OR TRAINING.

-- UK ASSESSMENT OF HOW IT COULD ASSIST BOTSWANA, IN COOPERATION WITH OTHER EUROPEAN NATIONS.

5. WE WOULD APPRECIATE A REPLY BY APRIL 15.
CHRISTOPHER

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NNN

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